

## REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 are amended herein. Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 remain pending. No new matter has been added as a result of the Claim amendments.

### Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

#### Claims 1, 9, and 17

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 9 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0101367 by Bartfai et al. (referred to hereinafter as “Bartfai”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,760,838 by Owen et al. (referred to hereinafter as “Owen”). The Applicants have reviewed the cited reference and respectfully submit that the embodiments recited by the claims are neither taught nor suggested by Bartfai or Owen, alone or in combination for the following rationale.

Applicants respectfully submit currently amended Independent Claim 1 (and similarly Claims 9 and 17) recites: “A method of error protection in a network environment, said method comprising:

utilizing a link to establish communication between at least two communicating nodes in a network;

realizing a data error during communication between said at least two communicating nodes;

providing an error indicator at said link when said data error is detected;

utilizing a blocking agent at said link to block communication between said at least two communicating nodes in response to said error indicator;

providing a clearing indicator at said link when said data error is resolved; and

utilizing said blocking agent to unblock said blocked communication between said at least two communicating nodes in response to said clearing indicator.”

Support for the Claim amendments can be found throughout the Specification and Figures including at least Figures 1, 5 and 7 and page 16 lines 1-30 and page 20 lines 1-25.

Applicants have reviewed Bartfai and respectfully submit that Bartfai fails to teach or render obvious the Claimed features. In contrast, Applicants understand Bartfai to teach critical adapter local error handling. For example, in the abstract Bartfai indicates that a mechanism is associated with adapters for indicating critical errors so that applications running on a network are not prematurely terminated and the node with the error is not prematurely removed from its connectivity with the other nodes within a network.

Further, Applicant understands Bartfai to teach when a threshold limit for refresh attempts is met, critical adapter errors become permanent adapter errors and permanent adapter errors cause a reset but do not initiate an adapter restart operation.

For at least this reason, Applicants submit Bartfai does not teach or suggest, “utilizing a link to establish communication between at least two communicating nodes in a network; realizing a data error during communication between said at least two communicating nodes; providing an error indicator at said link when said data error is detected; utilizing a blocking agent at said link to block communication between said at least two communicating nodes in response to said error indicator; providing a clearing indicator at said link when said data error is resolved; and utilizing said blocking agent to unblock said blocked communication between said at least two communicating nodes in response to said clearing indicator,” as recited in currently amended Claims 1, 9 and 17.

Applicants have further reviewed Owen and do not understand Owen to remedy the deficiency in Bartfai. Specifically, Applicants do not understand either Bartfai alone or in combination with Owen to teach or suggest the features “utilizing a link to establish communication between at least two communicating nodes in a network; realizing a data error during communication between said at least two communicating nodes; providing an error indicator at said link when said data error is detected; utilizing a blocking agent at said link to block communication between said at least two communicating nodes in response to said error indicator; providing a clearing indicator at said link when said data error is resolved; and utilizing said blocking agent to unblock said blocked communication between said at least two communicating nodes in response to said clearing indicator,” as recited in currently amended Claims 1, 9 and 17.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that currently amended Claims 1, 9 and 17 overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and as such are in condition for allowance.

Claims 3-8, 11-16 and 19-24

In the Office Action, Claims 3-8, 11-16 and 19-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Bartfai in view of Owen and further in view of Lindsay (6,654,908). Applicants have reviewed the cited references and respectfully submit that the embodiments recited by the claims are neither taught nor suggested by Bartfai in view of Owen and further in view of Lindsay for the following rationale.

Applicants respectfully submit currently amended Independent Claim 1 (and similarly Claims 9 and 17) recites: “A method of error protection in a network environment, said method comprising:

utilizing a link to establish communication between at least two communicating nodes in a network;

realizing a data error during communication between said at least two communicating nodes;

providing an error indicator at said link when said data error is detected;

utilizing a blocking agent at said link to block communication between said at least two communicating nodes in response to said error indicator;

providing a clearing indicator at said link when said data error is resolved; and

utilizing said blocking agent to unblock said blocked communication between said at least two communicating nodes in response to said clearing indicator.”

Support for the Claim amendments can be found throughout the Specification and Figures including at least Figures 1, 5 and 7 and page 16 lines 1-30 and page 20 lines 1-25.

Applicants respectfully submit that currently amended Claims 1, 9 and 17 are not taught or rendered obvious over Bartfai in view of Owen and further in view of Lindsay for the previously provided rationale incorporated by reference herein.

As such, Applicants respectfully submit that currently amended Claims 1, 9 and 17 overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and as such are in condition for allowance.

With respect to Claims 3-8, 11-16 and 19-24, Applicants respectfully submit Claims 2-8 depend on allowable Claim 1, Claims 11-16 depend on allowable Claim 9 and Claims 19-24 depend on allowable Claim 17; and that these dependent claims include all of the limitations of their respective independent claims. Further, these dependent claims include additional limitations which also make them patentable.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 3-8, 11-16 and 19-24 overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and as such are in condition for allowance.

Conclusions

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, Applicants respectfully solicit allowance of these claims.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,  
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